

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of the Claims

Claim 1 (currently amended) A self-cleansing system that performs routine and cyclical, self-cleansing activities without waiting for or detecting a system failure comprising:

- a) at least two subsystems, said at least two subsystems including an active subsystem and at least one available inactive subsystem, wherein said active subsystem is automatically assumed to have failed regardless of whether said active subsystem actually has failed;
- b) a communications link connecting said at least two subsystems;
- c) a local network ~~capable of~~ connecting said at least two subsystems to an external network;
- d) an arbitration mechanism ~~capable of~~ designating one of said at least one available inactive subsystem to be a designated active system;
- e) an IP address shared by at least said active subsystem and said designated active subsystem, only said active subsystem utilizing said IP address to output information to said external network;
- f) a transfer mechanism ~~capable of~~:
 - i) deactivating said active subsystem, causing said active subsystem to become a deactivated subsystem; and
 - ii) activating said designated active subsystem, causing said designated active subsystem to become said active subsystem; and

- g) a self-cleansing mechanism ~~capable of~~ automatically cleansing said deactivated subsystem, causing said deactivated subsystem to become one of said at least one available inactive subsystem.

Claim 2 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said arbitration mechanism uses a criterion to select which of said at least one available inactive subsystem is to be designated said designated active subsystem.

Claim 3 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said transfer mechanism is activated by a transfer criterion.

Claim 4 (original) A system according to claim 3, wherein said transfer criterion is a fault detection criterion.

Claim 5 (original) A system according to claim 3, wherein said transfer criterion is an intrusion detection criterion.

Claim 6 (original) A system according to claim 3, wherein said transfer criterion considers time.

Claim 7 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are firewalls.

Claim 8 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are servers.

Claim 9 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are gateways.

Claim 10 (original) A system according to claim 1, further including an integrity check capability.

Claim 11 (original) A system according to claim 1, further including an audit capability.

Claim 12 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said self-cleansing mechanism includes a capability to reboot at least one of said at least two subsystems.

Claim 13 (original) A system according to claim 1, further including shared storage accessible by at least two of said at least two subsystems.

Claim 14 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said communications link is part of said local network.

Claim 15 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said active subsystem is a plurality of active subsystems.

Claim 16 (currently amended) A method of self-cleansing a system by performing routine and cyclical, self-cleansing activities without waiting for or detecting a system failure comprising the iterative steps of:

- a) designating one of at least one available inactive subsystem to be a designated active subsystem, said at least one available inactive subsystem being part of at least two subsystems, said at least two subsystems:
 - i) include an active subsystem , wherein said active subsystem is automatically assumed to have failed regardless of whether said active subsystem actually has failed;
 - ii) are connected by a communications link;
 - iii) ~~are capable of~~ sharing an IP address; and
 - iv) are connected to a local network that is ~~capable of connecting~~ connected to an external network;
- b) when a transfer criterion is satisfied:
 - i) deactivating said active subsystem, causing said active subsystem to become a deactivated subsystem; and
 - ii) activating said designated active subsystem, causing said designated active subsystem to become said active subsystem; and
- c) automatically cleansing said deactivated subsystem, causing said deactivated subsystem to become one of said at least one available inactive subsystem;

wherein only said active subsystem utilizes said IP address to output information to said external network.

Claim 17 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein said step of designating one of at least two subsystems to be a designated active subsystem uses a criterion to select which of said at least one available inactive subsystem is to be designated said designated active subsystem.

Claim 18 (original) A method according to claim 17, wherein said transfer criterion is a fault detection criterion.

Claim 19 (original) A method according to claim 17, wherein said transfer criterion is an intrusion detection criterion.

Claim 20 (original) A method according to claim 17, wherein said transfer criterion considers time.

Claim 21 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are firewalls.

Claim 22 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are servers.

Claim 23 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are gateways.

Claim 24 (original) A method according to claim 16, further including the step of checking the integrity of at least one of said deactivated subsystem.

Claim 25 (original) A method according to claim 16, further including the step of auditing said system cleansing actions.

Claim 26 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein said step of cleansing said deactivated subsystem includes rebooting said deactivated subsystems.

Claim 27 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein said active subsystem is a plurality of active subsystems.